

Message Text

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SUBJ: 1980 PAN-AFRICAN TRADE FAIR

REF: (A) KHARTOUM 655, (B) KHARTOUM 1260, (C) 77 STATE
295550, (D) USICA 1718

1. IN JANUARY 1980 KHARTOUM WILL HOST THE PAN-
AFRICAN TRADE FAIR IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE THIRD
ANNUAL KHARTOUM INTERNATIONAL FAIR. OAU COUNCIL OF
MINISTERS FORMALIZED THIS DECISION AT THEIR RECENTLY-
CONCLUDED SUMMIT CONFERENCE.

2. EMBASSY STRONGLY RECOMMENDS THAT USDOC CONSIDER
MAJOR USG PRESENCE AT THIS FAIR. PREVIOUS
OBJECTIONS TO OFFICIAL USG PRESENCE IN KHARTOUM
INTERNATIONAL FAIR SHOULD POSE LESS OF A PROBLEM IN
1980. FIRST, LACK OF SUFFICIENT ADVANCE NOTIFICATION
OF FIRST AND SECOND KHARTOUM INTERNATIONAL FAIRS WILL
NOT BE AN ISSUE. FAIR WILL OPEN APPROXIMATELY 18
MONTHS FROM NOW, WHICH, WE UNDERSTAND, IS THE LEAD
TIME REQUIRED BY USDOC. SECOND, DOUBTS
ABOUT THE COMMERCIAL VIABILITY OF AN OFFICIAL US
EXHIBIT WILL BE PARTIALLY ALLEVIATED BY PAN-
AFRICAN CHARACTER OF THE FAIR. MOREOVER, RECENTLY-
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PAGE 02 KHARTO 03305 221321Z

CONCLUDED INTERIM AGREEMENT WITH THE IMF WILL IMPROVE
SUDANESE BALANCE OF PAYMENTS POSITION AND SHOULD OPEN
ADDITIONAL CREDIT LINES FOR MAJOR PURCHASES. A
NUMBER OF ARAB AND WESTERN DONORS HAVE MADE PLEDGES
OF NEW RESOURCES FOR THE NEXT TWO OR THREE YEARS WHICH
MAY PROVIDE PROCUREMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN THE UNITED
STATES. LASTLY, ARAB AUTHORITY FOR AGRICULTURAL

INVESTMENT AND DEVELOPMENT IS NOW FUNCTIONING IN KHARTOUM AND A NUMBER OF LARGE AGRICULTURAL PROJECTS INVOLVING A HEAVEY EQUIPMENT COMPONENT WILL BE FUNDED IN THE NEXT TWO TO THREE YEARS.

3. USDOC SHOULD ALSO CONSIDER ACTIVITY OF MAJOR US COMPETITORS IN THE EQUIPMENT AND MACHINERY FIELDS. EC HAD LARGE PAVILION AT '78 FAIR AND THE COUNTRY EXHIBITS WITHIN IT WERE EXTREMELY WELL RECEIVED. BRITISH, WHO ARE OUR MAIN COMPETITOR IN AGRICULTURAL FIELD, ALSO HAD SUBSTANTIAL NUMBER OF EXHIBITS IN OUTDOOR AREA. EAST BLOC COUNTRIES EXHIBITED LARGE AMOUNTS OF NON-ELECTRICAL MACHINERY, AS DID SWISS AND AUSTRIANS.

4. 1979 KHARTOUM FAIR WILL INCLUDE CENTERPIECE EXHIBIT PROVIDED BY USICA. A NUMBER OF AMERICAN FIRMS HAVE INQUIRED ABOUT PARTICIPATION AT THIS FAIR AND HAVE INDICATED THEIR INTENTION TO SEEK INDOOR SPACE IN THE AREA ADJOINING THIS EXHIBIT. NEARLY ALL US EXHIBITORS AT THE '78 FAIR WILL RETURN AND WE CAN COUNT ON AN INCREASE THIS YEAR WITHOUT ANY RECRUITMENT EFFORT. STATESIDE RECRUITMENT FOR THE 1980 FAIR, TOGETHER WITH A USDOC-MOUNTED EXHIBIT, SHOULD FURTHER EXPAND PARTICIPATION BY US FIRMS.

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PAGE 03 KHARTO 03305 221321Z

5. WE BELIEVE THAT STRONG CASE CAN BE MADE FOR USDOC PARTICIPATION IN 1980 FOR THE REASONS DISCUSSED ABOVE. WOULD APPRECIATE INITIAL USDOC REACTION AND SOME INDICATION OF ANTICIPATED TIMETABLE FOR CONSIDERATION AND APPROVAL OF THIS REQUEST.
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